The Unjust Steward

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> Luke 16:5-6
> And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.
Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.
I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.
So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?
And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.
Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.
And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.
And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.
He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.
If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?
And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?
No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.
Luke 16:1-13In the Epistle to the Galatians, the Holy Spirit emphasises with great force that we no longer live under the law, in the dispensation of the law, or under the bondage of the Old Covenant. We now live under grace, in the dispensation of grace, and in the liberty of Christ under the New Covenant.
Moses (as a type of the law) was indeed given by the LORD to the people of Israel. Yet the LORD Himself later took this same Moses away from the people of Israel.
Deuteronomy 34:5-9
"So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.
And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended. And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the

spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses."
Moses was not taken away because there was anything wrong with him — his eye was still clear and his strength had not faded. The LORD simply declared that it was enough. Moses had fulfilled the purpose for which the LORD had sent him to Israel. Now the time had come for Joshua to take his place and lead the people of Israel through the Jordan into the Promised Land.
In the same way, the law was not set aside because it had become defective. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12). The law had simply completed the task for which God had given it. In the true Joshua — the Lord Jesus Christ — the law condemned humanity at the cross. Thus an end came to the law and to the dispensation of the law, and a new dispensation broke forth: the dispensation of the grace of God.
Under the leadership of the risen Joshua/Jesus we too would cross the Jordan — that is, we would go the way of death and resurrection — so that He might bring us into His heavenly country.
We must be deeply aware that when the LORD ends something, we are not to be stubborn or wilful and try to continue with what He has finished. Serving Moses out of gratitude after he has died would be bordering on insanity. When the LORD has appointed the living Joshua — Jesus — and His New Covenant of grace, we must surrender ourselves wholly to Him, to His Word, and to His work within us. If we try to place anything alongside Him (such as the law or our own works), we again drift towards spiritual madness.
The story before us concerns a man who listens attentively and then acts in accordance with what he has heard. This steward hears that a different stewardship, a different household order — in other words, a different dispensation — is about to begin. He hears that the dispensation of the law is coming to an end and that the dispensation of the grace of God is about to dawn. And he acts accordingly.
His way of acting may be considered unjust by everyone else, but he is not troubled by that. As steward, he is answerable only to the one who appointed him steward, householder, and dispenser.

The Unjust Steward
Luke 16:1-13
This is a magnificent parable, and it is a pity that many people know only the closing statement from it: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." They assume that "serving God" is positive and "serving mammon" is therefore negative. Several parables are fairly straightforward because the Lord Jesus explains them. But this one He does not explain, so we face a small difficulty.
How is it possible that this unjust steward is praised by his lord and master?
What exactly is a steward?
According to Scripture, a steward is responsible for a particular household. The Greek word is oikonomos — house manager, steward, dispenser.
Oikos = house
Nomos = law, lawgiver, administration
Oikonomia = stewardship, household order, dispensation
Our English word "economy" comes from this same Greek term.

Verse 1: “And he said also unto his disciples…”
The little word “also” links this parable to the preceding one of the prodigal son, who likewise “wasted his goods.” Shortly we shall return to that connection.
The rich man has a “household” — a occupied house. Over this household he has placed a steward to manage it. It is a lived-in house (oikos) that must be administered according to lawful principles (nomos). This particular household (the dispensation of the law) is at this point still under the management of this steward.
To help you think in the right direction, let me name two stewards of the law:
Moses, who eventually had to make way for Joshua.
The Lord Jesus Himself, who had to make way for the risen Christ.
The rich man in this parable can represent no one other than the living God.

Verse 1: “…and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.”
The steward had been made responsible by his lord for the entire house. Others now accuse him. According to them, he has been managing his lord’s household in an unjust and unlawful manner. “Accused” comes from the Greek diaballo —The devil is “the accuser of our brethren” (Revelation 12:10). Those who live under the law (his brethren according to the flesh) and who have the devil as their father (John 8:44) are his accusers.
“Wasted” means to scatter, to distribute liberally. “Goods” means everything that belongs to the rich man. The steward is scattering with a generous and gracious hand all that belongs to his lord.
This steward is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, and He too was accused. People said He was “a gluttonous man, and a winebibber” (Matthew 11:19) and that He kept company with harlots and publicans (Luke 15:30).

Verse 2: “And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.”
The rich man summons his steward and demands an explanation. “Give account of your stewardship, for you will no longer be steward over this household” — that is, over this dispensation, the dispensation of the law.
The steward is called to account. He must hand over the books, because this household order:
will be taken from him,
will be brought to an end once the steward himself has paid the bill.
That dispensation will cease because another dispensation is about to be instituted. Shortly the steward will be permanently removed from the stewardship of the law. The Greek word oikonomia (stewardship) is exactly the same word used for “dispensation” or “household order.”
This change of stewardship therefore means a change of household administration — a change of dispensation.
The LORD has several names for this dispensations, some of which are named in Scripture:
Ephesians 1:10 — the dispensation of the fulness of times
Ephesians 3:2 — the dispensation of the grace of God
Ephesians 3:9 & Colossians 1:25-26 — the dispensation of the mystery, of which Paul says he was made a minister

Every believer in Christ is also a steward of the mysteries of God (1 Corinthians 4:1-2) and of the manifold grace of God (1 Peter 4:10). We are expected to be faithful to what this dispensation of grace stands for:

> living by the riches of God's grace,
> showing grace instead of law and justice,
> forgiving one another,
> seeking those things which are above where Christ sits,
> and liberally scattering the riches of God to others.

There are seven dispensations (household orders), corresponding in principle to the seven days of Genesis:

1. Conscience
2. Human Government
3. Promise
4. Law
5. Grace
6. Fulness of Times
7. The 1,000-year Kingdom

The rich man is a picture of the living God. The LORD maintains different days, different dispensations, different household orders.
The concept of "house" has several applications in Scripture: the whole creation is His house; the tabernacle and temple were His house; Israel was called the house of Israel; the Church, the body of Christ, is now the house of God; and the Spirit of Christ dwells in every born-again believer.
When we speak of our own household, we must know what rules apply in that house. We need to understand which principles governed previous dispensations and which govern the present and future ones.
1 Timothy 3:15 reminds us how we ought to behave ourselves "in the house of God."
Moses, as steward of the dispensation of the law, was responsible to bring the words of God to Israel. The whole nation of Israel was also a steward, responsible to teach those words to their children and to proclaim the Messiah (to whom the law testified — Luke 24:27, 44) to the nations. Any Gentile who accepted God's Word and believed would share in the blessings and citizenship of Israel and in that stewardship.
Both Moses and the nation of Israel can therefore be seen as stewards of the law.
In the dispensation of grace, the stewards are: the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the Apostle Paul, and every member of the household of faith (1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 1 Peter 4:10). As believers, we all have the responsibility to preach and practise grace.
If anyone brings the message of law instead of the message of the grace of God, he is accursed (Galatians 1:6-9). "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Romans 10:4) "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Galatians 3:24)
This is the glorious liberty into which we have been brought! Let us therefore walk worthy of it, faithful in the grace that has been entrusted to us.

> Titus 2:11-13
> "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly,

righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

We preach to believers and unbelievers alike the surpassing riches and greatness of the grace of God. The word of the grace of God has now been committed to us — to us who were once Gentiles. (See Acts 28:28; Romans 10:19-20; 1 Peter 2:8-9.)

We see, therefore, that a stewardship — a dispensation — can indeed be brought to an end. One dispensation is set aside and another is brought in. Here in the parable, the stewardship, the household order, the dispensation of the law is being lifted away, and the stewardship, the household order, the dispensation of the grace of God is being established.

Verse 3: "Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed."

"What shall I do now, for my Lord is taking this stewardship away from me?" He knows and believes that this stewardship will be removed from him, for it had been announced to Him beforehand. He knows He must hand over the books and give account of His stewardship. He considers in His heart what He will do, and then He forms His plan.

This Steward is a picture of the nation of Israel in its role as steward. Yet we must conclude that here we are dealing with a true believer from within the people of Israel — a Believer who was faithful in the exercise of His stewardship, and who believed that this stewardship would indeed come to an end with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The majority of the nation of Israel neither knew, nor believed, nor desired that they would be removed from their stewardship. Even today that people still does not believe that, since the death and resurrection of Christ, they have long been set aside from it. Sadly, many Christians also still do not know, and still refuse to believe, that the stewardship of the law was brought to an end at the death of the Lord Jesus. They continue to live under the household of the law and therefore under the elementary principles of the law and of this world. That is why they will never act as "wisely" as this Steward!

"Dig" (skapto) means to lay a foundation upon which to build. (See Luke 6:47-48; 13:8.) "I build only on Your Word; I stand only on Your foundation. I will not dig to revitalize the fig tree, watering it and adding manure, for under the law that fig tree will remain unfruitful and will therefore be cut down."

1 Corinthians 3:11:

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 2:20:

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

The law is not a foundation to stand upon; it is the stone that crushes those who try to live under it.

"To beg" (epaiteo) means to pray, to request, to keep asking. To keep begging that the law might remain a little longer.

"Ashamed" (aischuno) carries the sense of dishonour and disgrace.

The Steward is therefore saying: It is a shame for me to choose any other foundation than Christ. It is a shame to continue living under the law when grace has been given to me by faith. It is a shame to keep asking for forgiveness of sins when all our sins were forgiven once for all in the resurrection of Christ. Our sins no longer exist before God.

Hebrews 8:13:
"In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

Why live under the Old Covenant when the New Covenant has already dawned? Why dig and beg for something that is obsolete and near to disappearing? Why live as a pauper when everything belonging to this Rich Man is freely given to us by grace? Why dig and beg when God has given us everything in the Lord Jesus Christ, on the ground of faith and out of the riches of His grace?

Romans 6:23:
"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
Romans 4:5:
"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

Verse 4: "I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses."

On the ground of His faith, He knows exactly what He will do. He knows that He will not only be dismissed from His stewardship, but that if He does not make the right choice, He will be left standing outside.

What does "their houses" mean? Into which house will this Steward logically come after the house of the law? Which household follows the household of the law? Precisely — the household, the dispensation of the grace of God!

He therefore considers in His heart: How, in what way, shall I act so that they will receive Me into that house of grace?

And what is the answer? By already showing grace now — even while still under the dispensation of the law. He thinks ahead. He is One who takes the Word of God seriously. He is One who believes that when God announces a New Covenant, the Old Covenant is, in God's eyes, already obsolete and ready to vanish away (Jeremiah 31:31; Hebrews 8:13).Because this Steward does not want to vanish away with the Old Covenant, He now reckons and acts according to the principles of the New Covenant.

Matthew 27:52-53:
"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

These saints had believed in the Lord Jesus, who spoke of the New Covenant of grace. Though they had died, by faith in His resurrection they still received a share in it.

Verse 5: "So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?"

He knows how He is going to proceed, so He calls the debtors and asks: "How much do you owe my lord? What does life under the law demand of you?"

Verse 6: "And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty."

A "measure" or "vat" is an earthen vessel. Every man is an earthen vessel. What should be inside every man is oil, water, the Word of God — that is, the Lord Jesus Christ

Himself.
Oil is a type of the Holy Spirit, of the Word of the Spirit, and of the Anointed One — the very life of Christ.
100 = the eye of the needle — entering the Kingdom of Heaven.
If you try to enter the Kingdom of God by the works of the law, you must fulfil the full 100% demand of the law. The law says, "Do this, and thou shalt live." If not, you shall die. The first debtor acknowledges that he is undeniably guilty before God and says: the law demands 100%. It requires of me a perfect, 100%, spiritual life. But this is something I can never achieve. I can only by faith appeal to Your grace.

> Romans 7:21-24 - he says with the Apostle Paul:
> "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"
> Galatians 5:3:
> "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law."

You cannot keep one part of the law and omit another. The Steward says to him: "Well answered. Now sit down and stop working."
Live from the rest in Christ. Live from the finished work in Christ. Take your bill and write quickly fifty. From now on write fifty. Reckon from now on with 'fifty' and from 'fifty'. Reckon as though Pentecost has come (born of the Spirit of God). Live from the New Covenant of grace.
Write hastily fifty: Do not delay any longer to take your part in the New Covenant. Do not delay becoming a new creature in the Lord Jesus Christ.
50 = Nun = fish. It comes after the fulness of the "7" (7 × 7 = 50). 5 (grace) in fellowship with the Word of God (= 10) leads to the New Creation (= 50).
Not by law, but only by grace and through faith does one enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Joshua the son of Nun = Jesus, the son of the fish (50). Thus one still enters the "100", but now on the ground of grace (5 × 10), and as firstborn with the double portion, a joint-heir with the Son of Joseph.

Verse 7: "Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore."
The Steward asks: "How much do you owe my lord?" He replies, "My debt is a hundred measures of wheat."
100 again speaks of entering the Kingdom of Heaven. But that will not happen, for I am 100% a sinner and therefore guilty of death.
Wheat (chatah) speaks of the sinner, sin, sin-offering. Wheat is a type of the natural man, personally responsible for his thoughts, deeds and works. Every man, every sinner, is 100% guilty.

> John 12:24:
> "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

The debt is therefore reckoned on the basis of the work of the true Wheat Grain. The Lord Jesus is the true Wheat Grain. He was made sin for us. "For he hath made him to be

sin for us, who knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Because He died for all, all died. When we believe in Him who rose from the dead, we now live from Him, through Him, and unto Him.
The Steward therefore says: "Write eighty." Acknowledge for yourself that life, with or without the law, gets you nowhere. You are by nature deserving of condemnation before God, but you appeal to His grace. If you desire, apart from the works of the law, to become a new creature in the Lord Jesus Christ (the true Wheat Grain), then write "80". 80 is a picture of the new life that lies after the 7.
80 = Pe = mouth. The life of the sinner living by the works of the law is negative:
"This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Matthew 15:8).
But the life of that same sinner living by grace is positive:

> Romans 10:8-10:
> "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Not on the ground of works, but on the ground of faith and grace one enters the New Creation.

Verse 8: "And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."
This Steward had acted prudently — "with a forward-looking eye", looking to the things to come.
At first sight we seem to have a problem. If the Rich Man praises him, why is this Steward still called unjust? He was already called unjust long before he reduced or settled the debtors' debts. Yet although He is called unjust, the Rich Man praises Him for His far-sighted action and for His desire to enter the other house — the next household order.
He was not praised for His unrighteousness. Literally speaking, it was precisely because of that unrighteousness that He was dismissed and ultimately condemned at the cross of Golgotha. He was praised for His prudence — for acting in faith. The Steward had insight based on His faith in the prophetic Word. This cannot be said of legalistic Christians. They do not believe at all that the law was brought to an end at the cross. (Jeremiah 31:31-32; Romans 10:4; Galatians 3:24; Colossians 2:14-17; Hebrews 7:15-18; Hebrews 10:1.)
But let us return to the text:

Verse 8: "And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."
Here the Lord Jesus suddenly shifts from speaking of this one Steward to speaking of "children" (sons). Sons represent different generations within a people, or generations among the nations. The children of this world (the sons of this age) have the god of this world — the devil — as their father. The various generations among the Gentile nations walk in darkness and have the god of darkness as their guide and prince. The generations (sons) of the people of Israel, on the other hand, were supposed to walk in the light of God's Word. The Jews — the twelve tribes of Israel — were themselves

stewards of the dispensation or household of the law. From this parable it becomes clear that it is not the Steward who is truly unrighteous. Rather, the Jewish people, the twelve tribes — these stewards — proved to be the unrighteous ones. The Gentiles, especially the ten tribes scattered among the nations because of their unfaithfulness to the Word of God, had fallen into darkness and taken the god of this world as their leader. Yet now they are coming to faith in Him who is the Light of the World. They (and therefore we) are being drawn out of this present evil world so that they may walk in the light of God and His Word. In doing so, they act more prudently and wisely than the sons who were actually the stewards and therefore responsible for the light. The children of light are the Jewish people, the twelve tribes of Israel. To them were committed the oracles of God — the light. (Romans 3:1-2.) They were responsible for it. Like the Steward, they too were stewards of that light, stewards of the Word of God. But they did not believe in the Word of God, and therefore not in the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the law testified. The children of this world — various generations from among the Gentiles — are now looking ahead. After the Word of God was preached to them, they became wise in their thinking and doing. They have become the believers from among the other Gentiles. Israel, the Jewish people, the twelve tribes, as stewards of the light and thus of the Word of God, acted unwisely. They remained unbelieving. They did not believe that the stewardship would be taken from them. Even now they still cling desperately to a life under the law. The unjust Steward, as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the believing remnant of Israel, did look ahead. He is therefore praised by the Rich Man for His faith and insight. The people of Israel, the twelve tribes (who were also stewards under the law), did not look ahead, did not act accordingly, and thus proved to be “unbelieving and unrighteous stewards.” The Lord Jesus, portrayed in this Steward, did not preach or practise the law but grace — even though He lived during the dispensation of the law. (Galatians 4:4.) He had come to fulfil, to complete, and to end the law — to fulfil all the righteousness of God. As the Lamb of God, the Redeemer, the Go-el, the Son of Adam, He bore the sins of the world and of all humanity on the tree. That is why He was the appointed One to preach the grace of the Kingdom of God and to bestow that grace. Although it was still the dispensation of the law, He already preached and practised the Kingdom of God and the dispensation of the grace of God. He announced what would come after the household of the law and acted accordingly. In the eyes of those living under the law, this appeared unrighteous. This Steward is called unrighteous because He scattered the goods of His Lord and did not adhere to the manner of conduct that the religious leaders interpreted from the law. Moreover, because it was already determined that He would be removed from His office, He acted with that forward-looking gaze toward the future — toward the New Covenant and the new stewardship that would follow. (Jeremiah 31:31 ff.)

And what kind of “stewardship” is this? It is the stewardship of forgiveness, redemption, and the blotting out of debt — the stewardship of the grace of God.

Titus 2:11:

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.”

Since the end of the law, everyone — believers and unbelievers alike — lives under the dispensation of the grace of God. The world uses (and abuses) this grace as an argument against God, saying: “Why does God do nothing?” or “If He does nothing and says nothing, then He must be dead.” Yet God is doing everything — in particular, He speaks through His Word and gives grace. That is why He does not punish now;

punishment comes only after this fifth stewardship, the dispensation of the grace of God. In this parable, and certainly from the resurrection onward, the law no longer applies. The law has been ended and fulfilled. Its demand was fully met at the cross of Golgotha. If people do not believe this and still want to live under the law, they regard this Steward — who bestows His grace on others — as unrighteous. We too, if we wish to live from the grace granted to us and practise this grace of God toward others, are considered unrighteous in the eyes of Israel and of all who place themselves under the law.

Verse 9: "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." "Mammon" does not speak of money but of wealth, possessions — that in which a person places his security. Since our new birth we have found and received our security, our wealth, and our riches in the Lord Jesus Christ. Here "mammon" is applied to the wealth and security that have been secured in Christ Jesus and which we have now received by faith. (See verse 12 — "that which is another man's.") Our security, our possession, and our wealth, which we have received in Christ Jesus by grace and from which we desire to live, is to those who live under the law "the mammon of unrighteousness." The Lord Jesus now steps out of the parable. "You" refers to the Jewish people, the twelve tribes, those living under the law. He says to the sons of light (the Jewish people) that they must make friends with this (in their eyes) unjust Steward, for on the ground of faith and by grace He will also cancel their debt. Make friends also with the mammon of unrighteousness — with the wealth, possessions, and security of this unjust Steward — so that you too may dwell in that eternal house. The Lord tells the Jewish people, the twelve tribes, that they should do exactly as this (in their eyes) unjust Steward has done. They should follow the example of the children of this world who acted prudently and who already share in the wealth, possessions, and certainties (the mammon) of the unjust Steward. They would do well to follow the example of this Firstborn of Israel and of all who are now firstborn in Him! "When ye fail" refers to the time when the household of the law, the Old Covenant, will be broken and set aside. The life under the Old Covenant will fail you, for you will be put out of your house and your stewardship. This has already happened. (See Acts 1:20.) If you are wise, if you are prudent, then make friends with the "unjust" Steward and live from His "unjust" mammon, so that you too may be received by those who already share in the other House — that eternal House. 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:21-22; 1 Peter 2:5 show that the House after the resurrection is an eternal, spiritual House — a temple, a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. We (Gentiles) have become part of it by grace and through faith. If we are regarded as "unjust stewards"? So what? By faith we have received a share in the stewardship of grace. We have a share in an eternal House, in the New Creation, in the Church, and above all in Christ, in whom all our debts have been cancelled. We have the boldness to live from His rich, abundant grace. The parallel in the parable is clear:

The Steward in relation to the Old Covenant = Moses, Jesus, the people of Israel.
The Steward in relation to the New Covenant = Christ, Paul, every believer.

The only difference is that we, in the eyes of those living under the law, are seen as "unrighteous." Yet those who live under the law are called by the Lord: "unrighteous,

stiff-necked, ungodly, sinners, murderers of fathers and mothers, manslayers, accusers of the brethren," etc. (1 Timothy 1:9 ff.).
This Steward, coming from the previous house and the previous dispensation, is none other than the Messiah of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. When we enter the New House — of which we are part by faith and out of the riches of God's grace — we come to the Head of the Church, Christ Jesus the Lord. The unjust Steward is none other than the Lord Jesus Himself. Israel owes her origin and her entire existence, under all circumstances, to her Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He is this Steward. Therefore: Give account of all sins and guilt.
Which man could have given account to this Rich Man — to God who is rich? Who could have paid this costly bill? Who was able to render a full account to this Rich Man? Not the people of Israel. Not the Gentiles. Not mankind in general. No — it was the Lord Jesus who would settle the account Himself. It was the Lord Himself who could and would give account. It was the Lord Himself who would pay the full 100%. It was the Lord Himself who voluntarily gave His life in order to put an end to the demand of the law. The Lord Jesus was not unrighteous, but He is here presented as the personification:

- of the people of Israel, who had to give account to this Rich Man;
- of the whole creation, which stands guilty before the Creator;
- of every man, who stands guilty before his Creator.

The rendering of account for humanity was done by the Son of Man. The rendering of account for the whole world was done by the Lord Himself. He died for, on behalf of, and in the place of His creation. As Jehovah and Creator, He is Himself responsible for His creation. The rendering of account for the sin debt of humanity was done by the Son of Man, our Go-el, our Redeemer, our Saviour. The rendering of account for the guilt of Israel was done by the Prince of Israel — the Lord Himself. And Jehovah has always acted with prudence — long before the foundation of the world. (Genesis 1:1.)
For before the foundation of the world the Lamb was already slain. (Revelation 13:8; 1 Peter 1:19).
From the very beginning the Lord had the Church in view. (Genesis 2; Ephesians 5.)

> Ephesians 1:7-8:
> "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence."

Luke 16:16 tells us by whom the Kingdom of God was preached, and thus the New Covenant and the New Creation: by the Lord Jesus Himself. He reached forward into it. He could and might do so, because He would settle the sins, debts, and all shortcomings of the whole human race by Himself. In this parable the Steward also reached forward to the things to come. This unjust Steward is therefore none other than the Lord Himself. The Lord preached and demonstrated to Israel what would come after the law — another household order with all its consequences. He proclaimed and demonstrated the New Covenant. He might have expected that the oldest and most responsible people among the nations — the Jewish people, the twelve tribes of Israel — would follow Him in this and become His followers (disciples). That is, that the Jewish people, the twelve tribes, would also make friends with the unrighteous mammon. "Make yourselves friends with those who (in your eyes) are unrighteous — with those who have not lived under the 'right of the law'. Make friends with the Gentiles who do

not take the law so strictly as their rule of life, because they know (they believe) that Someone else has fulfilled that law."
Reckoned according to the law we would be unrighteous, but by faith in Jesus Christ we are justified. In Christ we live by and out of the riches of God's grace. The "security" we have is based precisely on the fact that our righteousness is not of our works but by faith and out of the riches of God's grace. Grace is our security, our guarantee, and our wealth in Christ. To those living under the law, grace is regarded as "unrighteous." Thus both this Steward and His mammon — His "wealth" (the ability to love, to give grace, and to justify on the ground of faith alone) — are seen and called "unrighteous" by a life under the law. That we are justified by faith and by grace means exactly that our justification is not of our works and not of our own "wealth." Nothing is so uncertain as living from "own strength" and "own works." It is therefore by grace and from Christ that all these things have been freely given to us. The mammon is our security ("I am persuaded," says Romans 8:38-39) — our safety and our treasure laid up in Christ. It is the grace revealed to us in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not contrary to the law; it is the fulfilment of the law.

Verse 10: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."
The situation today remains exactly the same: everyone is pressing violently into it — that is, doing violence to the Kingdom of God, to the grace of God, and to the New Covenant.
To Israel, therefore, it is said that in earthly, natural, visible things she has been "unrighteous" and still is. She was unfaithful in "that which is least" — that is, she was unfaithful (unbelieving) to the light and to the Word of God under the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant, the law (the least), spoke of the New Covenant (the great). They refused to believe this Word. It follows naturally, then, that they will also be unfaithful (unbelieving) in "that which is great" — that is, to the word of grace of the New Covenant.
I cannot help it, but the Lord Jesus calls the law "the little." To the Old Covenant of the law (the least, the smallest) they were already unfaithful. How much less, then, will they be faithful to the New Covenant of grace — "the great"!
Even though the law is the Word of God, there is another Word that is far greater, far better, and far superior. This too is the Word of God, but it speaks of the grace and peace of the New Covenant. This surpassing riches of God's grace is far more abundant.

> Romans 5:20:
> "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

Put another way: If we believe the Word of the Old Covenant of the law, we will also believe the Word of the New Covenant. For the law is one great testimony concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and His work.

Verse 11: "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?
"The same thought, but now expressed differently. If you did not believe the Word of the Old Covenant; if under the Old Covenant (which is a shadow of good things to come) you did not wish to live by faith and from the wealth, possessions, and certainties of

God promised in the Messiah — then the chance is very great that when the “true” has come — that is, the life of Christ under the New Covenant — you will remain unbelieving.
You will still try to live from your “own wealth” and from “own strength.”
If a Christian does not wish to live from the “wealth” of the Lord Jesus Christ, from the “security” of faith, and from the riches of His grace (and therefore logically does not bestow grace on others but instead makes demands), then do not think that the Lord will entrust to you “the true riches.”
The unrighteous mammon is a type of “the true” — of Christ, the life and mind of Christ, the life under the New Covenant with all its consequences.

Verse 12: “And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?
”Again the same thought, but formulated differently. If you are unfaithful in one thing, another thing will not be entrusted to you.In the original Greek, “faith” and “faithfulness” are the same word. So it could just as well read: If you do not believe that the law speaks of the righteousness of God and of the grace of God that would be established in Christ and under the New Covenant, then you cannot have any part in it when the New Covenant has come.Hebrews 8:5; 10:1: The law is the shadow of good things to come. If one is not faithful (believing) to the shadow (the law, which tells and demonstrates coming good things), then in practice one will have no part in “the true.”

Verse 13: “No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”At the beginning we already pointed out the little word “also” in verse 1, which links this parable to Luke 15. There too we find someone who “served” his Father, yet forgot to live from the “wealth” of his Father. (Luke 15:29)The younger son in that parable is a type of the ten tribes of Israel. He wastes his substance among the Gentiles. But when he comes to himself (Jeremiah 31:19), he returns in faith from his dispersion to the Father.The elder son, who stays with the Father, is a type of the two tribes, the Jewish people. He fails to live from the riches, possessions, and wealth of God the Father. This elder son who remained at home did serve his Father, but not with his heart. He served in a religious, legalistic way.Romans 10:2 ff.: Paul says of them, “For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”They absolutely refuse to believe that God justifies man on the ground of faith alone. They cling to the idea that by the works of the law (religion) they can establish their own righteousness. In doing so they have not submitted to the righteousness of God. They have not submitted to the Divine Word, which declares that man is justified by faith alone.
Verse 13: And since the Lord Jesus advises Israel especially to make friends with the “unjust Steward” and to live from the “unjust mammon,” the only conclusion left for us is that “serving God” here has the same meaning as in Luke 15:29 — that is, “serving God by a life under the law.”
No servant can serve two masters. It is about stewardship, about a household order. A house servant, a householder, a steward cannot serve two households. You cannot live

under the law and under grace. You cannot live under the Old Covenant and under the New Covenant. You cannot live under the principles of the Old Covenant and under the principles of the New Covenant. Law and grace are complete opposites!Law = death, struggle and falsehood (the Lord does not demand this of man).
Grace = life, peace and truth (the Lord gives this to man). (John 1:17, KJV
)If you want religion (the law), you cannot have it under grace. Therefore the command is: Let the law go, for it is obsolete and, certainly in the days of the Lord Jesus, was near to vanishing away. The Lord Jesus preached what would come after the law — "new things," a "new stewardship" under the New Covenant.
Therefore: Seek your salvation with the "unrighteous" — for there your friends are. There you can take refuge in their House, which is being built by God Himself. (1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2) — a House of which we are living stones and in which we dwell. This is under the stewardship of Paul, but above all under the stewardship of Christ — the dispensation of the grace of God.
We therefore do not live under the law but under grace. We do not live in connection with earthly things, such as "the law of a carnal commandment," but under the "New Covenant" — the Covenant of life, peace, liberty and grace!
We are therefore not ministers of the Old Covenant, that of the law, but ministers of the New Covenant, ministers of the Spirit, ministers of Christ. We belong to "His" House. If we want to have part in Him, we must leave the "old house." We must renounce the law and the legal principles of this world.
"No servant can serve two masters... for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
No house servant (oiketes — someone who lives in the house) can serve two lords. He cannot be the servant of two households. He cannot be the servant of the dispensation of the law and the dispensation of grace.
Notice carefully how they are paired, but not in matching columns of left and right:
Hate the one and love the other
Hold to the one and despise the other
Serve God and mammon
If "serving God" were automatically positive, we would have the problem that we must also "hate" Him. If we take the other column, we face the same difficulty. The only solution is to let the context decide who or what belongs in which pair.

Jesus Himself is seen as the "unjust steward" because He lived during the time of the Old Covenant (the law) but intentionally operated according to the principles of the New Covenant (grace).
Here is a detailed breakdown of why the sources draw this parallel:

- He was accused by legalists: Just as the steward was accused of wasting his master's goods, Jesus was accused by the religious leaders of His day of acting unlawfully. Because He liberally scattered God's grace by keeping company with "harlots and publicans," His detractors viewed Him as "a gluttonous man, and a winebibber" and thus, unrighteous.
- He operated on grace instead of the law's demands: In the eyes of those strictly living under the law, Jesus' actions were "unrighteous" because He did not adhere to the rigid conduct they interpreted from the law. Instead of demanding

the impossible 100% perfection that the law requires to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus offered forgiveness, redemption, and the blotting out of debt. To the legalists, substituting strict justice with free grace appeared to be "unjust".

- He possessed a forward-looking vision: The steward is praised for knowing his current position was ending and preparing for the next household. Similarly, Jesus knew that the dispensation (or household administration) of the law was coming to an end. He proclaimed and demonstrated the coming New Covenant—the dispensation of the grace of God—before it had fully arrived.
- He settled the impossible debt: When the steward reduces the debtors' bills, it symbolizes how humanity cannot pay the 100% spiritual perfection the law demands. Jesus is the ultimate steward because He voluntarily took responsibility for the debt of the whole creation, giving His life to fulfill the law's demands completely.

Jesus was not truly unrighteous. He is merely presented as the "unjust steward" because His radical distribution of grace was viewed as illegal and unrighteous by those desperately clinging to the obsolete system of the law.